

Captain America, Sentinel of Liberty #7:
"Arsenal of Democracy"

Plot for Ten Pages

Prepared for Matt Idelson

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[What's up, all? Steve, I enjoyed your work on Deadpool/Death and I'm really looking forward to working with you on this thing! My standard warning to first-time collaborators: My plot is pretty effin' detailed, so brace yourself. I'll throw in some dialogue every so often, but it's nothing I'm married to, just stuff to give you an indication of facial expression, panel size and emotion. Remember, my panel descriptions are just suggestions! I really do like collaborating, so if you ever see a way to do ANYTHING even a little better, go to town. This story has a lot of historical crap going on, so if you need help finding photo reference for something, please let me know and I'll try my best to track stuff down for you. Give me a call after you've read through this thing and we can chat. Cool? And away we go...]

PAGE ONE

1) We open on a three-quarter SPLASH of a pivotal moment in the life of Steve Rogers and Captain America. On a gorgeous oak bench just outside the door to the Oval Office, Captain America sits nervously next to an American flag and any other presidential decorations that might adorn the White House in 1941. He has his old triangular shield here, clutching it tightly. Security is tight inside, so Cap is comfortable enough to sit with his mask off. Off-panel, a voice says, "Captain? The President will see you now." Please leave room for the title and credits to go between this panel and the next. (Matt, is this the first story in the book? I presume it's the second, but if not, please also leave room for the indicia at the bottom of the page! Whew...)

2) At the bottom of the page, we have a long, narrow panel. It's just a close-up of Steve looking incredibly anxious as he stares at the door, grabs his collar and prepares to pull on his mask to meet the prez. Steve, remember that Rogers is only in his early twenties now and he's about to meet his lifelong hero. This is a silent panel, so really convey the fact that this is a kid being asked to do an army's job!

PAGE TWO

1) At the top of this page, we've got another long, narrow panel of Steve Rogers' face ... but this time, he's only sixteen years old. He's a real scrawny toothpick of a kid, but we should still be able to tell that

this is the guy who's going to become Cap. He's holding on to something above him and he looks positively panicked. Off-panel from above, someone says, "Steve? Where's ... Jeeze, give the weakling a hand!"

2) This is another long, narrow panel and it's a running image through our story. This panel is simply a bright red white and blue Election Day banner that says, "1933."

3) Pull back from the first panel to reveal that Steve is dangling from a fire escape ten stories up! We're in 1933 Brooklyn now, outside one of the few more upscale apartments in the neighborhood. Two of Steve's teenage pals have already made it safely onto the fire escape and are now pulling their friend up. Steve and his companions are poor kids of the Depression and should be dressed appropriately. One of the kids says, "Oomph! You gotta start working out, Rogers!"

4) Now all safely on the fire escape, the kids are very excited about something as they huddle underneath the window. Angle inside this window to reveal a relatively wealthy family gathered around a very large old radio cabinet. They're listening intently. One of Steve's friends says, "What do you think he looks like?" The other friend says, "He's seven feet tall, strong as a bear!"

5) Push in on just the kids now as Steve puts a finger to his lips and shushes his pals. They listen in wonder to what's coming from inside: the radio is broadcasting the inauguration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

6) Push in on just Steve as he smiles confidently while listening to FDR say his famous line, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself!"

PAGE THREE

1) In stark contrast to last panel, we open on another wide, narrow image of Steve, now a year older and very, very distraught as someone off-panel says, "Steven, I need to speak with you..."

2) This long, narrow panel says, "1934," but instead of a political banner, it's spelled out in drying laundry on an outstretched laundry line.

3) Pull back from the first panel to reveal that we're inside Steve and his Mom's very tiny one-bedroom Brooklyn apartment. There are piles of laundry EVERYWHERE and we should be able to see a large,

dilapidated radio underneath some of this laundry where one of FDR's fireside chats is playing in the background. Mrs. Rogers is lying in bed looking quite sickly and frail. A concerned Steve Rogers sits next in a chair next to her bed and softly says, "Don't worry, Ma. I finished both loads for the McKee family and I'll get started folding the--" His Mom quietly interrupts with, "Steve..."

4) Push in to just a shot of a dying Mrs. Rogers as she takes her son's hand. Please leave some room for her dialogue and FDR's broadcast about "the menace of demoralization" coming from the background. Steve's Mom says, "Come here, sunshine boy. I want to tell you something. Your life is always going to be a hard one, but don't let that harden your heart, you understand? A hard life can be a good life as long as you always do the right thing ... as long as you always do what you can to help others. Never forget that" Off-panel, Steve says, "Shh, Mom. Let me get your medicine."

5) Steve, this should be a very emotional shot as Mrs. Rogers passes away. Maybe we see her and Steve silhouetted against the sun that sets outside their small window. Steve clasps her hand tightly as she says, "No, you need that medicine more than I do. I've been saving it for you. You're such a beautiful boy, Steven. I have to go see your father now, you understand? Please be good. I lov..."

6) As the radio continues to play, we have a close-up of Steve's little hand holding the now-limp hand of his Mother as, off-panel, he says, "Mom? Mommy!"

PAGE FOUR

1) This long, narrow panel is a shot of a 21-year-old Steve coughing hard. Off-panel, someone says, "Hey, String bean! You dyin' over there or what? Get back to work!"

2) It's 1938 now and we see the year spelled out in colorful little subway tiles in this long, narrow panel.

3) Pull back to reveal that Steve is inside a busy Manhattan subway station. He's wearing a worksuit covered in paint and holding a brush and can. He's standing next to one of his fellow painters, a portly little man. We shouldn't be able to tell quite what they're painting yet. Steve says, "Sorry, my cough always get worse when I come down here." Fatso says, "Lighten up, Rogers. I'm just razzin' you. You take this WPA job way too seriously." Steve says, "I like this job!"

4) This is just a close-up of Steve as he meticulously adds a little detail

to his painting. Off-panel, Fatso says, "Whatever, give me a nice, cushy spot an ad agency any day." Rogers smiles and responds, "If FDR's boys hadn't given me that Works Progress Administration grant, I'd be homeless. I like knowing that artists are a valuable part of the country."

5) Pull back to this, the biggest panel of the page. Fatso says, "You're some piece of work, Rogers." Now we get to see what the two are working on, a HUGE beautiful mural. This should be depicting some piece of American propaganda from the Revolutionary War or World War I. (Anything but the Civil War, which is featured prominently in the other story in this ish...) Steve, this image should sum up the development of a young Steve's patriotism so knock us dead!

PAGE FIVE

1) A year later, this long, narrow panel has Steve looking up in utter horror at something. (Steve, I'll send you a copy of the original Sentinel of Liberty bookshelf, which has some nice reference for this page.)

2) This next long, narrow panel is the year "1940" in big numbers across a movie theater marquee.

3) We're behind Steve now, and we can see that he's inside a crowded movie theater looking up at a black and white image of Hitler standing next to the newly created Red Skull! The audience boos. Leave some room for balloons please as the News on the March announcer says that FDR has declared that the civil liberties of all men must be protected from this deadly ubermensch.

4) Back to Steve as his look of horror has become a look of steely, angry determination. The announcer explains that children are being snatched away from their mothers. Steve's heard just about all he can stand.

5) This is an establishing shot of a snowy U.S. Armed Forces Recruiting Center. Leave room for balloons as we hear Steve scream, "4F?! I know I'm sick, but you have to let me serve!"

6) Cut to inside the center. As Steve argues with a recruiter in the background, General Phillips speaks with a man in a white lab coat in the foreground. The man in the lab coat skeptically says, "Are you certain?" The General confidently says, "This is just the kind of man we're supposed to be looking for. Those orders come from the Commander-In-Chief himself."

PAGE SIX

1) Once again, we open on a long, narrow panel and this time we're looking at a 24-year-old masked Cap as he smiles and says, "Thank you very much, Mr. President."

2) This long, narrow "1941" panel should be something a little different. Maybe just a simple art deco font? Up to you.

3) Pull back to a big shot of the Oval Office as Cap proudly holds his brand new round shield. (The old triangular one should be visible somewhere, maybe leaning against the president's desk.) Behind the desk, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt smiles broadly and congratulates Cap. Cap says he hopes he can serve the country well.

4) Close on Cap as he silently salutes the president.

5) From behind FDR, we see Cap walk for the door and suddenly stop in his tracks. FDR asks, "What is it, Captain?"

6) Close on Cap as he turns around. He doesn't look like the patriotic super-soldier front he was putting on for the president. He looks like a scared kid when he says, "Permission to speak freely, sir?"

PAGE SEVEN

1) Close on FDR looking very fatherly as he says, "Of course, son."

2) Big shot of Cap here pulling back his mask and looking very small inside the imposing Oval Office. Lots of room for dialogue as he says, "Sir, I ... I don't know if I'm the right man for this job. A few weeks ago, I was painting murals in a subway ... I couldn't even do a chin-up, Mr. President. There have been soldiers who have been training their whole lives for this opportunity. There are others who deserved the super-soldier serum more than I. People like--

3) This has got to be a very powerful moment, Steve. Suddenly, Roosevelt WHEELS out from behind his desk.

4) We're looking up at Cap's jaw drop from down low, just behind FDR's wheelchair. Cap says, "You? You're..."

5) Close on a very serious FDR as he says, "Yes. Polio. Had it for years, but I never wanted the public to panic and ... well, I suppose I'm ashamed of it to be honest. The doctors say I may not have very

long..."

PAGE EIGHT

1) Close on a morose unmasked Cap as he says, "My God. You've been in office for most of my life and ... I never imagined that..."

2) Cap watches as FDR holds up a file that says "Steven Rogers" and says, "It doesn't matter. I swear to you, son. Physical strength isn't an important part of being a leader. Courage and integrity are. And you have those in spades. I know the kind of life you've led, Private Rogers. You became Captain America long before they pumped you full of any chemicals."

3) Close on a somber FDR as he says, "The doctors ... the doctors said they were going to attempt the 'Rebirth' process on me if it worked on the test subjects. With Professor Erskine dead, that's obviously no longer an option. You're the only American who will ever receive this gift, Captain America. Please don't waste it."

4) Even closer on FDR now as he says, "These are hard times for this country. Times that require good men. We are building an arsenal of democracy ... and we need a sentinel of liberty."

5) This is just a silent close-up of Cap's hand shaking the President's.

PAGE NINE

1) In this long, narrow panel, we see a masked Cap. He's only a year older but he finally looks like a man. He's hardened and battle-ready with a hint of blonde stubble. He looks up as someone off-panel says, "Cap? It's the president..."

2) Our final long, narrow year-panel reads "1945" in stenciled military font over the drab green color of an American uniform.

3) Pull back to reveal that Cap is in a bunker somewhere on the front lines of Europe. The walls around Cap's bunk can be covered with his hand-drawn sketches and paintings of America. He's just picking up his shield but looks up to see Bucky Barnes standing at the open door. Sunlight pours in as Bucky turns on a small military radio by the door and sadly says, "He's dead. I thought it was just an Axis Sally broadcast at first, but it's everywhere, Cap. FDR's dead."

4) Close on Cap as he looks down and whispers, "And an era ends..." Please leave room for a few other balloons as the radio says that FDR

died while writing one final speech...

5) Cap puts an arm around Bucky as the two walk for the door. We can now see that Cap is holding a memo. He says, "Let's save the mourning for later, Bucky. He would have wanted us to keep fighting for him. Military intel says that Baron Zemo has designed some kind of bomb-carrying drone-plane. Ready for action, partner?" Ignorant that this will be the mission where Cap disappears and he dies, Bucky smiles and says, "Always, Cap!"

PAGE TEN

1) This is an incredibly dramatic three-quarter SPLASH of Captain America confidently striding out of the bunker into the blinding sun ... and into history. Leave room for captions as the radio delivers FDR's final speech, "The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today..."

2) "Let us move forward with strong and active faith." We close on a flashback image of the destitute, sickly teenage Steve Rogers listening hopefully to his hero on the radio ... and dreaming of the future.

FADE OUT...